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ABSTRACT

An exploration of state-level adult learning activities encompassed all aspects of adult learning, with heaviest emphasis on postsecondary opportunities. It consisted of personal, face-to-face interviews with state officials, such as those in Educational Information Centers (EIC) programs, scholarship agencies, and Title I HEA (Higher Education Act) programs, in ten major states. Information was organized around personal impressions, problems and needs, and recommendations. Although the nucleus of activity exists, activities of adult educators in most states are not well coordinated. While official attitudes are sometimes helpful, sometimes guarded, many people are indifferent to lifelong learning. In fact the feeling that predominates is that lifelong learning as an issue lacks the "clout" needed to reorder state education priorities. Recommendations made in light of obstacles noted were these: (1) work to develop a national concensus on key terminology related to lifelong learning; (2) popularize the concept; (3) support expanded funding for adult learning services and a national examination of financial aid needs of adult learners; (4) promote information exchange on exemplary adult learning services; (5) work to establish new programs and services and technical assistance, or broaden the applicability of extant programs; (6) strengthen the relationship between the world of work and the world of education; (7) support the development and use of institutional, regional, and statewide need assessments; (8) support the continuation and expansion of the EIC program. (CP)

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Future Directions for a Learning Society

The College Board

The State Role in a Learning Society

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Prepared for

Future Directions for a Learning Society

The College Board
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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I. INTRODUCTION

The College Board's Future Directions for a Learning Society (FDLS) program is a three-year effort, funded by the Exxon Education Foundation, to develop a national perspective about the current status of lifelong learning and gain support for strategies, services, and policies which benefit adult learners in American society. The State Visitation Program (SVP) was one of a variety of initiatives undertaken by the FDLS program to clarify the issues involved in lifelong learning and to foster a better understanding of the problems and needs of adult learners.

The motivation for the SVP was to find out as much as possible, as a result of face-to-face contacts with leaders in the states, about services which they believe will be needed in the future due to increased efforts in the adult learning domain.

The focus became activity directly administered by agencies of state government on behalf of adult learners. Due to time constraints, no attempt was made to look at the often significant contributions on behalf of adult learners that are being made by individual institutions of higher education or various nongovernmental agencies and organizations which were located in the states visited.

State officials in the following categories were interviewed in selected states:

1. State higher education executive officers and/or their designated specialists in the area of postsecondary adult learning.
2. Title I, HEA administrators.
3. Administrators of Educational Information Centers (EIC) programs.
4. State officials concerned with basic and secondary school-level adult education.
5. State scholarship agency personnel.
6. Any other state officials who might be willing and able to shed light on this important topic.

In addition, the staff in the six Regional Offices of the College Board were alerted to the project, and personal visits were arranged where scheduling permitted.

A roster of the individuals contacted is appended to this report. The majority of these contacts were face-to-face interviews, though telephone interviews were conducted in several key instances.

Interviews were conducted in the following ten "target" states: California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.

Because about 57 percent of the U.S. population and the majority of the postsecondary institutions are found in these states,

it was felt that an exploration of the attitudes, trends, and needs among these states would be a substantial reflection of the status of adult learning, at the state level, across the nation.

The State Visitation Program faced two important limitations. The state visits were conducted rather quickly (usually within two days), with an average of over five interviews per state. Little opportunity was afforded for unhurried observations or the development of a "feel" for the problems and needs identified in each state. Further, the subject was so broad that, in the time available, only so much information could be gathered at each interview. Careful advance work, which resulted in the identification of the most appropriate state contacts, helped to compensate for these shortcomings. An analysis of written materials on state plans and activities helped to further my understanding of efforts in the area of lifelong learning.

A special thanks is extended to those interviewees who went above and beyond the call of duty to facilitate contact with the "right people" in each state as well as provide logistical support, among them Suzanne Ness of California, Samuel Johnson of Pennsylvania, Norman Kurland of New York, and Wilbur Hurt of Texas.

The report which follows contains:

1. My personal impressions of what the states are doing to advance the cause of lifelong learning;
2. The problems and needs which state officials have identified as obstacles to the promotion of the concept; and
3. My recommendations for action by the College Board, if the goal of making America truly a "learning society" is to be achieved with the help of that organization.

The report is being shared with the 55 individuals who were visited or interviewed by phone, as well as with a number of other key state officials in the target states whom I could not contact by either means. This is being done to provide an opportunity for correcting any inaccuracies in my reporting and to allow officials in each state to gain an appreciation for the extent to which they and their neighbors face the same challenges. Reactions to the report should be addressed to: Rexford G. Moon, Jr., Future Directions for a Learning Society, The College Board, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York, 10019.

William J. Hilton

II. WHAT THE STATES ARE DOING

The exploration of state-level adult learning activities encompassed a consideration of adult basic, high school completion, vocational education/training, and adult post-secondary learning opportunities, with heaviest emphasis upon the last. In assessing the level of state involvement in this area, three factors were examined: 1) the nature and amount of funding committed to lifelong learning activities; 2) the amount of program activity at the state level which is supportive of lifelong learning; and 3) the attitudes of state officials with regard to the future development of life-long learning activities in each state.

Funding

At the basic and secondary levels, state activities on behalf of adults are heavily funded by the federal government through such vehicles as the Adult Education Act (AEA) and the Vocational Education Act (VEA). A great deal of education and training activity is also being conducted under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), with less substantial resources being provided under Title I, HEA; through Community Education program grants; and through the Library Service Construction Act. In the guidance support area, federal funds are being provided through Educational

Information Centers programs, Talent Search activities (Wisconsin operates such a program under its student assistance agency), State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICCs), and Career Information Systems (represented in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin), as well as certain provisions of VEA, AEA, and CETA legislation. Several interviewees made it clear that, were it not for federal government involvement through these various pieces of legislation, adult participation in formal education and training activities on the present scale would not exist.

While the federal support of adult learning activities in these states is substantial, it is still less than the state contribution toward adult education at the basic and secondary levels. For example, while over $90 million has been appropriated for AEA, these ten states alone are receiving $47 million of that (51 percent) and are overmatching it with $101 million. (In all fairness, it must be noted that California and Florida account for over 80 percent of that state investment.)

At the postsecondary level, adult learning is primarily self-supporting (i.e., based upon fees paid by students), though some subsidization is provided through the community college education and training programs funded under various pieces of federal legislation, such as CETA and VEA. Further, several

of the target states are providing a limited amount of funding on a formula basis that is being used in support of adult learning, and at least one other state is contemplating providing such funding.

In most target states, funding was identified as the main obstacle to further expansion of adult learning at all levels of formal education, both credit and noncredit. Most contemporary adult collegians either pay for their instruction out of their own pockets, or are financed by their employers. There is general recognition that if lifelong learning opportunities are to be extended to the poor and historically undereducated adult, there must be greater government subsidization of the cost of these activities. However, only one of the target states appeared to be contemplating any significant expansion of adult learning subsidies, and none are providing this funding on what they would describe as an appropriate scale. Fee-based programs, especially those related to mandatory continuing professional education programs (as in the case of pharmacists and lawyers in Wisconsin), are thriving, but even the most moderately-priced programs now being offered in all of the states are beyond the affordability of the poor.

It seems reasonable to assume that more federal support could stimulate an expansion of state activity in the postsecondary

adult area, much as it has in the adult basic and secondary areas, but as yet no clear federal policy has been formulated. Until one does appear, it seems likely that the state level funding of postsecondary adult learning in these target states will continue to be minimal.

Program Activities and Official Attitudes

Virtually all of the SVP interviews were with state officials responsible for the administration of state level activities that impact upon lifelong learning, which also provided an excellent opportunity to gain insight into the attitude of state officials toward adult learning.

The administrators of adult basic and secondary level activity were interviewed in most of the target states. (In most of these states, adult basic and vocational education were administered under the same agency.) Under both AEA and VEA legislation, states are expected to develop and implement state plans which are administered in cooperation with local education agencies and organizations. While activity in this area is largely established routine (as opposed to some of the emerging initiatives in the area of adult postsecondary education), it is interesting to note that there is a great unmet need among adults at this level of education. For example, on the average, less than 5 percent of the population eligible to receive instruction at the basic and secondary levels is being served through current programs. (In California

and Florida, the percentages are highest at 38 percent and 11 percent respectively.)

Adult basic and secondary educators have formed their own state and regional professional associations and have acquired valuable expertise in certain areas of providing adult instructional services. In Texas, for example, a good deal of effort has gone into the development of in-service training materials for adult educators. Staff development is also a widespread concern among postsecondary adult educators who could benefit from the experiences of ABE officials in this area.

But in most of the target states, the activities of adult basic and postsecondary adult educators are not well coordinated. Only in a few of the states did these two groups participate in the same professional associations, and in only five states were staff at both levels of activity in regular contact with each other on matters of mutual concern. In at least three states, staff concerned with adult basic education were not acquainted with those (usually in higher education planning agencies) who were involved in postsecondary adult learning, and vice versa.

Most interviewees agreed that the lack of a coordinated approach toward the delivery of adult learning services is dysfunctional. In at least two states, adult educators have

been accused by state legislatures and others of duplicating services in the area of adult education because of a lack of coordination. The same demographic factors which have caused a decline in the enrollment of adolescent collegians is also causing a decline in enrollments at the K through 12 level, with the result that educators in both areas seem to be bolstering their enrollments by providing more and more educational services for adults.

Largely as a result of these pressures, in a few states the relationship between adult basic and postsecondary adult educators has become somewhat inimical. The perception that postsecondary adult educators are "Johnny-Come-Latelies" who want to "take over" the adult learning business has merely served to exacerbate interagency communications problems in this area. While it is important to recognize that such attitudinal problems exist and why, it must also be recognized that these feelings are not widespread, and that the prevailing relationship between these two groups of adult educators is one of peaceful coexistence.

My perspective on postsecondary adult education program activities was derived largely through interviews with state higher education officials (or their designees), Title I administrators, state scholarship agency personnel, and EIC administrators.

Knowledge about and attitudes toward lifelong learning varied widely among higher education chief executives. In eight of the ten target states, at least one higher education official has been designated to serve as a focus for adult learning activity, with statewide visibility within the adult education and higher education communities. However, not all of these appointees enjoy the same level of support and encouragement from their state's higher education leadership. Even in the two states where there are no focal appointments in this area, there has been some staff activity, usually in the direction of assessing the need for an increased commitment to state-level adult learning activities.

Some of the state higher education planning agencies have adopted a proinstitutional stance toward lifelong learning, and are eager to help campuses become more responsive to the needs of adult learners. Others seem primarily concerned about the stewardship of limited state resources, and are suspicious of institutional ambitions in this area. The dominant feeling among advocates of the former point of view seems to be that the teaching/research capabilities of higher education institutions can and should be brought to bear upon society's greatest problems. The latter view seems to rest on the belief that institutions which have experienced poor planning and management should not expect to be rescued

through public support for a new clientele.

These differing perspectives are somewhat oversimplified for ease of explanation. It must also be noted that a number of higher education executives subscribe to neither view, and appear to hold feelings toward the whole subject that could best be described as indifference.

Title I, HEA administrators have a long history of involvement in the areas of adult learning, despite the fact that some programs emphasize "community service" more than "continuing education." In at least two of the target states (Texas and Florida), Title I seems to be the focus of most of the state level activity in this area, and in the other states these programs are recognized as an integral part of the states' total strategy for serving adult learners. In general, Title I resources are used to finance need assessments and other research pertinent to lifelong learning, to finance guidance services for adults, and to support short-term, experimental education and training activities in higher education institutions.

State scholarship agency personnel in most of the target states were also consulted regarding their perspective on adult learning. Currently, every state and territory in the nation administers a state scholarship agency, and these agencies collectively provide over $700 million in tuition

assistance to state residents. Nearly 40 states also administer state guaranteed loan activities, which are usually also administered under the state scholarship agency.

Some scholarship agency staff are indifferent toward lifelong learning; others admit to knowing very little about it. Some are sympathetic to the cause, and would like to be more supportive of state colleges and universities by being able to provide more financial assistance to adult learners. (Currently, only nine states fund part-time students through these agencies.) But the prevailing view among these professionals seems to be that state priorities for financing higher education would have to be greatly altered before significant dollars could be committed to this purpose. Despite the magnitude of state investments in postsecondary students, most states can demonstrate a need for many more dollars just to help their traditional, primarily adolescent populations. There was a strong feeling that adult learning, as an issue, lacked the political "clout" necessary to force a reordering of state educational priorities.

It must also be noted that, while demands for the increased funding of independent, part-time learners have become a key issue among advocates of adult learning, there is no indication that the provision of such resources will greatly alter adult participation rates in traditional higher education. In Illinois, for example, where part-time students <u>are</u> eligible

for financial assistance through the state scholarship agency, that advantage has not had the influence on adult enrollments which many had hoped for. It may well be that the provision of student assistance for noncredit study would provide an even greater stimulus for adult learning, if institutional offerings could be delivered in a manner convenient to adults, but none of the scholarship agency staff were willing to predict that such funding would be provided by their states in the foreseeable future.

All of the ten target states are included in the 44 states and territories participating in the Educational Information Centers (EIC) program this year. In most of these states, the EIC program is recognized as an integral part of each state's lifelong learning activities, either administered by the state official responsible for this area or closely coordinated under a total state strategy for aiding adult learners. It is noteworthy that, in at least three states, efforts are underway to structure the EIC program so that it will be accessible to adults who are participating in the basic and high school completion areas, as well as those pursuing postsecondary learning opportunities.

With regard to EIC program development, it was encouraging to note that state leadership has been largely supportive of this new thrust. There has been a general delay in the start-up of EIC activities across the nation because of a

delayed USOE allocation, which then caused further delays in states in which the legislature had to approve the receipt of the federal matching grant. (Most state legislatures had adjourned by the date on which USOE grant award letters were issued, which resulted in delays of several months until state legislatures reconvened in fall 1978.) Several target states were affected by this reality.

Despite delays in program implementation, EIC activities in each of the states will be well underway during the early half of 1979, though the focus of these activities will vary from state to state. Most of them will be limited to an assessment of the need for an expanded EIC effort within their states. California has gone beyond that to establish two model EIC centers -- one rural, one urban. Illinois' emphasis has been placed upon the development of the information to be provided through the program, and New Jersey has established a statewide toll-free telephone inquiry system which is tied into Thomas Edison College in that state. EICs are often coordinated with Title I, HEA efforts, and the two of these now represent the most visible ways in which states can directly impact adult learning opportunities at the postsecondary level.

In summation, it can be seen that there exists a nucleus of state level program activity in support of lifelong learning.

These activities are most substantive in states in which the efforts of a variety of agencies and departments are well coordinated, and in which state educational leaders at both the secondary and postsecondary levels are committed to the advancement of lifelong learning. It is also clear that the necessary level of commitment might be fostered through increased communication among appropriate state officials, though it is unlikely that program activity will be sustained or expanded without additional funding.

My interactions with College Board regional staff during the course of these interviews, though limited, helped me to gain an appreciation of the extent to which the Board can have an impact in this area, provided its resources are properly marshalled, and its leadership is fully committed to the goal of helping America become a learning society. The recommendations which conclude this report identify some specific strategies for making such an impact.

III. OBSTACLES TO LIFELONG LEARNING

It will be remembered that the goal of the State Visitation Program was to learn as much as possible about what state officials perceived as their problems and needs in the delivery of adult learning services. Hence, each interviewee was asked for his/her opinions on this subject, and the collective wisdom produced an impressive list of concerns which will have to be addressed if lifelong learning is ever to become a reality on the broadest possible scale in this country.

A focus upon problems and needs with respect to <u>any</u> issue could have the effect of undermining one's confidence that a satisfactory solution can ever be achieved. This report was compiled for the purpose of identifying the obstacles to lifelong learning, as a logical first step in solving those problems. In the minds of the author and most of those interviewed, there has never been a doubt that the problems could be solved if they are realistically faced, and if the proper amount of resources, energy, and creativity could be committed to the effort.

Following is a list of 24 major problems and needs identified by the interviewees, with a brief background explanation of each.

Problems and Needs

1. There needs to be a national consensus on the meaning of certain widely used terms in this area. Unless there is common understanding of what terms such as "adult," "lifelong learning," and "adult education" mean, we cannot begin to communicate effectively. Further, we lack a solid basis for setting funding priorities for various segments of the formal education continuum. Until we can decide who we want to help and to what extent, public support for this thrust will continue to be limited.

2. Funding is a major problem. More funding was an overriding concern among most of the officials interviewed, but it was also acknowledged that the country's leadership will have to make some hard decisions about what is to be accomplished by public support of education before more dollars can be reasonably committed to this area. Postsecondary adult education also suffers in the competition for funding because of the widespread perception that it is a middle-class preoccupation and a device for colleges to offset enrollment losses, neither of which seem fairly supportable by limited public funds.

3. Where funding does exist, it may not be used to the best advantage for adult learners. Funding needs to be more competitive, so that only the "best" programs get support,

instead of the current procedure of making adult education funds available purely on the basis of state entitlements. "Best," in this context, refers to the programs that are most responsive to the needs of society.

4. Adult learning activites must be better coordinated. Everyone interviewed agreed on this point. Currently, in most of the target states, there is no single focus for all adult learning activities. Often, the responsibility for the administration of these efforts is either so diluted as to be ineffectual, or so duplicative as to be wasteful on a grand scale. The coordination problem takes many forms. Colleges are offering continuing education courses right in the backyards of other colleges. Especially where government support is minimal or nonexistent, instructional programs are sometimes duplicated to an inordinate degree. No clear jurisdictions have been defined between secondary, vocational, and postsecondary levels because no one knows whether to establish them on the basis of the learner's age or the level of instruction (often difficult to define) that he is pursuing. Hence, increasingly, adult education advocates at all levels of instruction are competing for the same clientele.

5. There is a tremendous need for more information about adult learners. There is a need for more information about the interests and needs of such learners, but the usual "need assessment" approach is not generally viewed as a reliable means

of getting that feedback, since such surveys among adults tend to be too dependent upon what they say they need or will do in the future. Further, too many need assessments are limited only to people who are already oriented toward school, whereas there is a great need for information about those who are not in school. More information is also needed about the differing "cognitive styles" of adult learners, how past learning experiences can be adequately assessed, and about the characteristics of such learners.

6. More programs and services are needed to help individual adult learners. Most often mentioned services in this area included:

a. Assistance in clarifying personal goals and in assessing individual strengths and aptitudes.

b. More assistance in identifying instructional and guidance opportunities which answer their needs.

c. Competency-based testing/certification procedures which help educators better judge the background and potential of adult learners.

d. More improvements in "passive learning" techniques (radio, television, slides, films, etc.).

e. More attention should be given to motivating learning among adults and overcoming the effects of past negative experiences with formal schooling.

7. Adult learner attrition needs to be reduced. Most of the interviewees did not have specific facts on how often adults tended to withdraw from their studies before completing a CEU (10 hours of classroom exposure) or other structured learning experience. Some attributed the problem to poor methods of student selection or failure on the part of the instructor to meet adult learners' needs. It was also noted that many adults who are mandated by law or professional peer pressure to continue their education have negative attitudes toward the experience which obstructs the learning process.

8. There is a great need to insure the quality of the adult learning services that are being provided. Under the general guise of being "nontraditional" and "innovative," a great deal of evil can and does occur. The further we stray from our traditional, familiar learning and teaching approaches, the more important it will be for us to carefully evaluate our efforts to insure that we are accomplishing the desired result. Unfortunately, very little attention is presently being given to quality control in adult learning, especially where noncredit, off-campus offerings are concerned.

9. Adult learning activities must be made more accessible. As one observer noted, access can be defined in geographical, transportational, psychological, cultural, and linguistic terms, and the ideal takes all of these into account. The requirements for adult access may differ greatly from those

of adolescent learner access, and postsecondary institutions and government agencies will have to be more aggressive in responding to that possibility.

10. There is a need for better outreach to adult learners. In this context, outreach refers to the process of informing prospective adult learners about the services that are available to them and encouraging them to take advantage of these services. Too many providers of adult learning services do not know how to "market their wares." It should be noted that the process of outreach begins with an understanding of where the adult learners are physically located and what kinds of services they need. A concern for outreach must be matched by a concern for accessibility.

11. More attention should be devoted to serving the rural, the very poor, the aged, and the illiterate. There are huge pockets of each of these special groups in America; except for the efforts of adult basic educators on behalf of the illiterate, none of these groups are getting much attention. Everyone agrees that the goal of becoming a learning society cannot be achieved until we can successfully address the needs of these groups.

12. There is a need for student assistance for adult learners. This view is fervently held by many advocates of adult learning, and is usually expressed in terms of a need for more state,

federal, and private dollars to support part-time students. It seems clear that efforts to increase funding for part-time students will be most likely to succeed once the need for such assistance has been well documented.

13. Private business and industry must be more involved on behalf of adult learners. Ultimately, business can expect to benefit by having a more enlightened labor force, and by not having to bear the expense of establishing alternative educational/training systems for accomplishing that goal. Currently, corporate tuition aid for workers is largely wasted, in part because the courses taken are fragmented and do not necessarily lead to the acquisition of needed skills.

14. There needs to be more local control of adult learning activities. Not only is this consistent with the ideals of a democratic society, but it is also probably the most effective way to build a constituency for adult education. When the people control the process and are able to manipulate it to their advantage (rather than to the advantage of government agencies or institutions), they quickly assume ownership of that process and are willing to work to protect it. Recognizing that such a system of local control will not always function in the best interest of existing institutions, many educators resist the notion of local control. Hence, this issue provides an excellent test of the commitment and priori-

ties of adult educators across the nation. (It is worth noting that several interviewees strongly supported the idea of local citizen councils or "Work Councils" as a means of promoting adult education.)

15. Adult education has an "image" problem. People who are most supportive of adult education tend to be educated adults or those in the business of educating adults. Higher education, which is still viewed by many as something apart from adult education, continues to enjoy a somewhat elitist image of ivy-covered facades on expansive green campuses. Even though the community college movement has done much to erode that imagery, many adults are uncomfortable about going back to a school, especially a college. As one commenter expressed it, "Adults must come to believe that a college education is as much for them as it is for their children." There needs to be a better understanding of adult reluctance in this area, and of how it can be overcome among adults who could truly benefit from furthering their education. To a large extent, the effective resolution of many of the other problems cited here should help to improve this image problem, but there is some question as to whether or not that would be true for all adults.

16. State regulations often obstruct adult learning. In one of the target states, it was noted that lower school instructional facilities are available for use in delivering adult

education services because of declines in the enrollment of elementary and secondary youth. However, state regulations regarding the use of those facilities, as well as state insurance requirements, prevent the most creative use of these facilities on behalf of adult learners. To the extent that such problems exist elsewhere in the nation, they represent a very real obstacle to lifelong learning.

17. Postsecondary institutions must be more sensitive to the needs of adult learners. Administrative procedures must be reformed so that adult learners do not have to stand in long registration lines or fill out complex data processing forms as though they were dependent adolescents. Instructional offerings must be more pertinent to their needs and must be scheduled at their convenience. Institutions need to be familiar with these problems and to be committed to their resolution. Coursework design needs to relate more effectively the teaching and research resources of the campus to the instructional needs of adult learners, thus insuring that the educational experience will have some practical benefit for them. To the extent that the colleges can receive technical assistance and financial support in all of these areas, adult access to higher education will be increased.

18. Faculty must be more sensitive to the needs of adults. In most institutions, faculty are not motivated by institutional

leadership to work on behalf of nontraditional students. Further, there is a very clear need to train staff to relate and be more sensitive to adults. One commenter emphasized the need to ensure competence among adult educators, since adult learners are more likely to recognize incompetence in a faculty member and to revolt against it.

19. Postsecondary institutions must make a more serious commitment of their own resources toward the creation of the learning society. In the view of at least one observer, a growing number of American colleges and universities are willing to gamble on adult learning on the chance that it will relieve their enrollment problems, but these institutions want someone else to finance that risk-taking and are unwilling (or unable) to commit their own resources to the cause. Without necessarily accepting the harshness of this analogy, one has to recognize that tangible expressions of institutional commitment are lacking (though not totally) in this area and that the appeal of lifelong learning is likely to increase in this "Age of Proposition 13," if it is not perceived as being totally dependent upon state and federal resources for its survival.

20. Adult educators lack an aggressive, broad-based constituency that could help to raise lifelong learning on the national agenda. To have such a constituency is to have the kind of "clout" that would be helpful in securing more public support. But too often adult educators appear to be the only ones inter-

ested in adult education. Building a broader constituency will not be easy, largly because of the nature of the adult clientele itself. Part-time students, for example, probably are part-time because their life circumstances leave them with little time for other pursuits, including the political advancement of adult education. Full-time, traditional students are not likely to fight to win this advantage for adult learners, especially if they perceive that in doing so they may have to share already limited student assistance benefits with this new clientele. Faculties, as has already been noted, are not getting their prestige needs met by service in this particular area. Since the strongest advocates of adult learning are those who have had some of it, the long-range solution to the problem of building a constituency may lie in further expansion of such services, coupled with a national effort to raise the public consciousness of their value.

21. The management skills of many proponents of adult learning must be sharpened. Public acceptance of K through 12 education, and of postsecondary education for adolescents, is deeply rooted in American society. In competing with these two systems for the kind of support that would be necessary to firmly establish a "third system" of education for adult learners, adult education administrators will have to demonstrate their efficiency in managing all aspects of lifelong learning programming. Good management should help to reduce the cost of the third system, and thus make it more affordable.

There is a clear need for more to be done in the area of management training than is now possible through the limited efforts of collegiate training programs and volunteer professional association.

22. Adult educators must be more creative in promoting lifelong learning. In a growing number of states, adult learning activities are being associated with the state's economic development. (In such cases, states recruit new business and industry by promising to help train and retrain employees for those firms.) Elsewhere, each new piece of state and/or federal legislation is being studied to determine if it has ramifications for adult continuing education, and mechanisms are being established to capitalize upon those that do. Higher education institutions are contracting to provide educational services to public employees at a time and place that is convenient to them, and similar arrangements are being made with private industry. All of these represent the kinds of creative approaches that will, over time, spread the benefits of adult education and help to build the needed national constituency. Some systematic attempt must be made to train adult educators in the use of such entrepreneurial approaches.

23. There is a critical need to educate both state legislatures and the Congress on the importance of adult education at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. This must be

done if lifelong learning is to achieve a higher priority on our national agenda, but at present no one seems to be making a conscious and significant effort in that direction. It was also noted that proponents of adult education need to be made more aware of how to negotiate with their state and national legislative leadership in realizing their goals.

24. Like legislators and college faculty, many school administrators also lack a proper understanding of the importance of adult education. Where adult learners are included in FTE counts for purposes of state reimbursement, local school administrators are understandably supportive. But where that monetary incentive is lacking, these administrators are often ignorant of, or indifferent toward, this area of educational activity. This either prevents the delivery of educational services to adults or insures that adult learning programs will be of poor quality. Collegiate administrators are often just as likely to be antipathetic toward adult learners. For example, in one state where postsecondary institutions (in this case, community colleges) are given a state allocation of discretionary money which they are encouraged to use on behalf of adult learners, the funds are being used instead to finance escalating teacher contracts!

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The College Board cannot, and probably should not, single-handedly try to make America a learning society, Achieving that goal must be a consequence of action by a number of individuals, agencies, and organizations, all acting in a more or less coordinated fashion to resolve the problems set forth in the last chapter. Resolution of particular problems has been assigned only for the College Board. States, institutions, federal agencies, and professional groups and organizations are in the best position to decide how they can respond.

1. Work to develop a national consensus on key terminology which is related to lifelong learning. Americans are a practical people who respond badly, or not at all, to esoterica. As long as the terminology in this field means different things to different people, legislative leaders, administrators, and the public at large will find it easy to dismiss this concept as being vague and, therefore, unimportant. The Board should establish an ongoing relationship with professional adult educators at all levels of instruction and in national and local professional associations. Through these contacts, efforts should be made to establish and promote a nationally acceptable lifelong learning lexicon which can be easily understood by both professionals and nonprofessionals alike.

2. Work to popularize the concept of lifelong learning. A valid criticism of lifelong learning is that its chief proponents either are well-educated adults or are in the business of educating adults. Instead of being a "grassroots" movement that is of and by the people, too often -- to too many people -- the concept seems elitist and impractical in nature. Ironically, millions of Americans are lifelong learners, whether or not they are attending formal classes, but no one has told them that they are, and so they have not been able to identify with what is potentially the most exciting movement in American education. What is needed is a concerted effort, via the popular media, to educate the public to what lifelong learning means, how they can benefit from it, and how they can support its continuation and expansion. Such campaigns have been very successfully mounted against or in support of such topics as smoking, adult illiteracy, the need to "support your local college," and to relieve test anxiety among users of the Board's Admissions Testing Program. With its New York offices located in the hub of the advertising industry, the Board is in an excellent position, in cooperation with other interested groups, to foster a greater public awareness in this area.

3. Support expanded funding for adult learning services at both the local and national levels. Realistically, anything that the Board can do to 1) popularize lifelong learning; 2) strengthen the professionalism of adult educators; and 3) compile and disseminate the kind of information which both demon-

strates the importance of this concept while defining reasonable strategies for the creation of a learning society will indirectly increase the likelihood of more state, federal, and private funding in support of adult learning services. Doing all of this, however, will require a full-time, ongoing commitment. No major activity in which the Board is now engaged matured overnight. One mechanism for operationalizing this and a number of other recommendations could be the creation of a Division of Adult Learning Services (DALS) as a permanent organ of the Board, charged with developing and implementing strategies in the three key areas identified above.

4. Promote an exchange of information regarding exemplary adult learning services. Perhaps as part of its diffusion activities, DALS could develop a national consensus with regard to exemplary models for delivering adult learning services at the local, state, and national levels. To the extent that the models are both effective and cost effective, they should be well-publicized among state and national legislative bodies, where they might be instrumental in influencing funding requirements, with a consequent reduction in the coordination problems that are now so disruptive in the adult learning field.

5. Work to establish new programs and services, or broaden the applicability of existing ones, on behalf of adult learners.

In view of the numbers of adult learners on this continent alone, this area of activity can have an obvious impact upon College Board revenues. But the future prospects for income from this market would be greatest if strategies in this area are approached cautiously, thoughtfully, and with the real needs of the public foremost in mind. Unless popularization (see Recommendation #2) precedes program development, the incentive to buy products, regardless of their quality, will not be there.

The nature of the marketable programs and services will very from region to region and state to state, depending upon the needs of citizens, their willingness and ability to pay, and the inclination of third party sponsors (such as state agencies) to pick up the tab on behalf of those who cannot pay. Hence, a more detailed assessment of potential service needs, which considers these and other factors, must be made in each of the regions served by the College Board.

The SVP visits verified that considerable interest exists among the states in the provision of adult guidance tools and services, passive learning materials (slides, films, television, videotape, etc.), competency-based testing materials, and personal assessment materials, but the cost of developing and/or revamping materials in any of these areas would make it unwise to embark upon such an undertaking purely on

the strength of a few interviews.

The SVP has identified key contacts in many of the states who should be involved in that assessment effort, and guidelines should be developed for regional and central office staff visits with major local and national providers of adult learning services in the conduct of the assessment.

6. Cooperate in a national examination of problems and needs related to financial aid for adult learners. The College Board should impanel a task force for the purpose of looking closely into the issue of financial aid for adult learners. The goals of that task force might include: 1) assessing the extent to which adults are now, in fact, using private and governmental aid resources; 2) determining how many part-time learners are adult learners; 3) assessing the extent to which postsecondary institutions are willing to support adult learners; 4) attempting to develop consensus on the assumptions that would have to be reflected in a need analysis service for adults; 5) assessing the receptivity of the federal government toward an adult need analysis system; 6) looking at the extent to which nonfinancial hurdles obstruct adult access to higher education, etc. The publication of considered findings on these and related topics could help to set realistic expectations among adult educators across the nation.

7. Support efforts to strengthen the relationship between the world of work and the world of education. It seems clear that adult learning which has an economic impact will have a greater appeal in some quarters than adult learning which only emphasizes the intrinsic value of learning. Not only will government leaders be more responsive to the practical aspects of adult learning, but so will many individual learners who are motivated by the perception that they are likely to benefit, in a tangible way, as a result of continuing their education. Furthermore, it is clear that much better use can be made of the teaching and research capabilities of higher education institutions in support of our national labor force, and that a more aggressive posture in this area alone could represent a major thrust that would be mutually beneficial to higher education institutions, the College Board, and labor and management. If such benefits are to be realized, the Board must maintain a current understanding of the philosophical and operational problems to be overcome in this area.

8. Provide support in the development and use of institutional, regional, and statewide need assessments. The College Board should impanel a group of specialists in this area for the purpose of defining: 1) the purposes and value of need assessments; 2) the kinds of information which should be collected in assessments of adult learning service needs; and

3) the methods by which assessment instrumentation can be adapted to diverse communities of varying sizes. This panel should also be charged with the field testing and refinement of suitable instrumentation in this area.

Work toward the development of need assessment instrumentation should be viewed as a response to the need for greater professionalization among adult educators. Such an effort will be very helpful in defining the long-term market for adult learning services, which in turn should be helpful to the management planning of the Board, the states, and other organizations in the future.

9. Provide technical assistance to institutions, agencies, and organizations which are interested in providing adult learning services. The mechanism for doing this might well be the proposed DALS. The procedure might involve the creation of a service in which institutions, agencies, and organizations pay an annual subscription fee in return for a carefully defined package of technical assistance services. The overriding goal of the service would be to help institutional subscribers ease their transition into the learning society. Specific subscription benefits might include participation in a series of regional dialogues which provide instruction on key topics, a "hotline" which provides ready access to a researcher who can find answers to special problems, free

initial copies of specifically commissioned papers and other Board publications that are pertinent to adult learning, etc. Many of the problems and needs identified in the last chapter can be most effectively addressed through this mechanism, including such issues as staff training, the design and implementation of outreach services, techniques for evaluating learning services, sharpening the management of program administrators, and even instruction in the formulation of strategies for financing such services.

10. Support the continuation and expansion of the Educational Information Centers (EIC) program, as well as other such information authorities. The Board was wise to establish a network of regional offices which could bring its programs and services closer to the people for whom they were designed. There is, however, some question in the mind of the author as to whether these offices can adequately meet the technical assistance needs of all of the schools and colleges in the nation at their present staffing levels, not to mention the additional burden of relating to a vast new market of adult learning service providers. At the same time, a vast expansion of regional office services without the clear prospect that such action, in the long run, can be justified would be poor management.

A happy medium seems to lie in promoting the availability of

nonschool counseling outlets through which College Board programs and services can be effectively disseminated to adult learners. Like schools and colleges, these outlets could not guarantee the exclusive promotion of Board services, though biases are likely to form in favor of the national service that is the most helpful, and produces the most adult-oriented products. Regional staff can then concern themselves with providing technical assistance to this new population of nonschool counseling contacts, including EIC administrators, TRIO/EOC personnel, and a broad variety of others. (In a recent FDLS-sponsored survey of EIC administrators, only Massachusetts and Illinois indicated an active involvement with the regional offices of the College Board, suggesting that these offices need more visibility among nonschool counseling groups.) Furthermore, the regional offices provide an excellent mechanism for disseminating DALS materials, and at least one staff member in each of these offices should be trained to represent the adult learning services of the Board.

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